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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000320

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SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FROM SAUDI ARABIA - APRIL 21, 2006

Classified By: Management Officer Hector Morales for reasons  
1.4(b) and (d)

FROM THE EASTERN PROVINCE -- THE ENEMIES OF ISLAM: AMERICA  
AND "ENEMIES WITHIN"

¶1. (C) On Friday, April 21, at the Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque in Khobar, Imam Shaykh al-Qahtani reprised one of his greatest hits, a brazen political sermon delivered a few years ago which, while conceding that the United States and the West are enemies of Islam, stressed the greater danger of "enemies within," fellow Muslims who form a fifth column rather than acting as faithful followers of God's religion. Al-Qahtani accused Arab leaders of seeking only to please their Western masters, and the West of intimidating them into doing its bidding. An Arab leader "will throw people in jail under the pretext that they are extremists who must be dealt with, or he will kill others because of their alleged links to terrorism, or even shut down a charity because it was used to fund terrorist operations," he said. "This is the way to make sure the red carpet will be rolled out for him." America, in turn, uses scare tactics to coerce Arab leaders into "combating Muslim expansion or anything that smells like it." "What do you expect," al-Qahtani asked, "of a leader who is repeatedly told that his end will be in the hands of Muslim extremists?" Yet America will not succeed, he predicted. As the 19th century belonged to the Christians and the 20th to the Jews, it is God's will that "the 21st century will belong to Islam and Islam only." "Istanbul and Rome will be the key to the re-introduction of Islam to Europe," he said. "Their fall will herald its return to that continent."

FROM MECCA -- FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS THE DOOR TO REFORM;  
PRAYER FOR GOD TO DEAL WITH "OCCUPIER ZIONIST JEWS"

¶2. (U) Speaking at the Sacred Mosque in Mecca, Imam Shaykh Salih bin Abdullah bin Humayd devoted his sermon to freedom of expression and reform. He began by saying that freedom of expression, or dialogue, is the door to reform. "People exchange talk for the sake of construction and mutual understanding and not for confrontation and clashing," he said. Dialogue is "the pillar of education" and "the key to reasoning," and it enables construction, change, and reform. Therefore, he said, "It must have its freedom." However, "freedom is a responsibility, and the aim is reform and construction and not destruction or corruption." Accordingly, "there must be rules for this freedom, and standards for this responsibility." He continued, "What must be observed in the rules of freedom of expression and freedom of the word is sincerity, search for the truth, and avoidance of the

tendency to follow one's whims and to use the word for personal triumph or fanaticism for a group, a sect, or an idea." Moreover, "it is essential to side with the truth and to accept it from whatever side."

¶3. (U) The imam's second sermon carried the same theme. "The word of truth and justice is desirable and praiseworthy," he said, "and the word of falsehood is forbidden and condemned." The imam prayed for God to "support the mujahidin who struggle in your cause to elevate your word." Praying for God to support Islam and the Muslim people, he concluded, "The occupier Zionist Jews have tyrannized, harmed, corrupted, destroyed, killed, and evicted." He continued, "O God, deal with them for they are within your power."

FROM MEDINA -- AVOIDANCE OF EXTREMISM IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE;  
PRAYER FOR GOD TO "CLEANSE AL-AQSA MOSQUE FROM THE FILTH OF  
THE JEWS"

¶4. (U) In his sermon at the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, Imam Shaykh Salah bin Muhammad al-Budayr said the Islamic nation has reached its high status because of the Qur'an, the Sunna, and shari'a, which are against extremism. Rejecting the idea that moderation means the destruction of values and the corruption of morals, he said, "Centrism in Islam is avoidance of extremism on issues of faith, belief, legislation, politics, peace, war, the call, education, reform, behavior, and worship, and in fact in all aspects of life." "Giving free reign to one's desires and rejecting the shari'a controls, and openness without distinguishing between what is permissible and what is forbidden and between what is useful and what is harmful, is not part of the tolerance and

JEDDAH 00000320 002 OF 002

magnanimity of Islam," he said. On the other hand, "depriving oneself and society of the good things of life and permissible enjoyment and the useful innovations of the age are not part of moderation."

¶5. (U) The imam again approached the subject of moderate Islam in his second sermon. He called on God to support Islam and the Muslim people, while, as in the sermons from Mecca, praying for God to "deal with the usurper Jews and treacherous Zionists." He added, "O God, kill them with their weapons, burn them with their fire, and make them a lesson for others. O God, cleanse al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of the Jews." Concluding his sermon on a more peaceful note, the imam prayed for unity in Iraq and for security, prosperity, dignity, and stability in Saudi Arabia, so that its leaders may serve the might of Islam and the Muslim people.  
Gfoeller